

REMARKS/ARGUMENTS

Pursuant to the foregoing Amendment, claims 1-11, and 13-21 are currently pending in the present application. Claim 12 has been canceled without prejudice. Claims 1, 8, 13, 14, and 16 have been amended to more distinctly claim subject matter which the Applicant regards as the invention. New claim 21 has been added to more distinctly claim subject matter which the Applicant regards as the invention. Applicant submits that no new matter has been introduced into the application by these amendments.

Allowable Subject Matter

The Examiner is thanked for indicating that claims 5-7, 12-15, and 16-20 contain allowable subject matter.

Claim Objections

The Examiner objected to claim 16 because of the redundancy of the word "said", and objected to claims 17-20 for depending from claim 16. The redundant appearance of "said" in claim 16 is deleted in the foregoing amendment. Applicant respectfully requests the withdrawal of this objection.

Claim Rejections – 35 U.S.C. §102

The Examiner rejected claims 1, 2, and 4 under 35 U.S.C. 102(b) as being anticipated by U.S. Patent No. 5,766,989 to Maegawa et al. (hereafter Maegawa). Applicant respectfully disagrees.

In contrast to the present application, Maegawa does not disclose or suggest the steps of forming at least one seed made of amorphous silicon on a substrate, and then forming an amorphous silicon layer on the substrate, overlying the amorphous silicon seed, as recited in amended claim 1. Maegawa teaches a microcrystalline silicon layer containing microcrystals as the crystal grains growing seed, not an amorphous silicon layer as claimed in the present invention, (Maegawa, column 6, lines 49-51). The

microcrystalline silicon layer of Maegawa is obtained only under certain conditions, or a normal amorphous silicon layer will be obtained (Maegawa, column 5, line 66 - column 6, line 20). Maegawa teaches that if an amorphous silicon layer is formed, the amorphous silicon layer can be annealed by a laser beam to obtain the microcrystalline silicon seed layer (Maegawa, column 6, lines 20-24). Accordingly, the Applicant submits that independent claim 1 as presently amended is patentably distinguishable from Maegawa, and the withdrawal of this rejection is respectfully requested.

With respect to claims 2 and 4, claims 2 and 4 depend from rejected claim 1, and incorporate all of the limitations of claim 1. For the reasons presented above with respect to claim 1, Applicant requests withdrawal of the 35 U.S.C. § 102(b) rejection of claims 1, 2, and 4.

The Examiner rejected claim 8 under 35 U.S.C. § 102(b) as being anticipated by U.S. Patent No. 4,799,097 to Szluk et al. (hereafter Szluk). Applicant respectfully disagrees.

Claim 8 has been amended to include the limitations contained in allowable claim 12. Szluk doesn't teach or suggest the step of forming at least one seed comprising the sub-steps of: forming an intermediate covering layer on said first region of said substrate; patterning said intermediate covering layer to define said intermediate covering layer as a specified pattern; forming an amorphous silicon spacer beside said specified pattern; and removing said specified pattern with said spacer remained to form at least one seed on said first region of said substrate. Accordingly, the Applicant submits that amended claim 8 is not anticipated by Szluk. Withdrawal of the rejection under 35 U.S.C. § 102(b) of claim 8 is therefore respectfully requested.

Claim Rejections – 35 U.S.C. § 103

The Examiner rejected claims 3, and 9-11 under 35 U.S.C. § 103(a) as being unpatentable over Maegawa in view of U.S. Patent No. 6,489,222 to Yoshimoto (hereafter Yoshimoto). Applicant respectfully disagrees.

Applicant submits that claims 3 and 9-11, which depend from claims 1 and 8,

respectively, and incorporate all of the limitations of the claims from which they depend, are distinguishable from the prior art for the reasons presented above. Withdrawal of the 35 U.S.C. § 103(a) rejection of claims 3, and 9-11 is respectfully requested.


Conclusion

If the Examiner believes that any additional minor formal matters need to be addressed in order to place this application in condition for allowance, or that a telephone interview will help to materially advance the prosecution of this application, the Examiner is invited to contact the undersigned by telephone at the Examiner's convenience.

In view of the foregoing amendment and remarks, Applicant respectfully submits that the present application, including claims 1-11, and 13-21, is in condition for allowance and a notice to that effect is respectfully requested.

Respectfully submitted,

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